NOTE XXIX.

ON AN UNDESCRIBED SPECIES OF ARDEA (ARDEA LANSBERGEI).

BY

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Ardea Lansbergei.

His Excellency, the present Governor General of Dutch India J. W. van Lansberge, Bart. L. L. D. by repeatedly authorizing exploring expeditions into different parts of the Indian Archipelago has given a glorious example how to promote a science which he cultivates himself most ardently. Mr. J. E. Teysmann honorary Inspector of the cultures at Buitenzorg in the isle of Java, put at the head of the expedition, was accompanied by a certain number of hunters for the purpose of collecting and preparing zoological objects. During a visit in the district of Macassar in the southern part of Celebes, the party met with the undiscribed species of heron, the epithet of which will serve to remember the name of one of the few high functionaries, who appreciate the interest and value of scientific researches.

The Ardea Lansbergei appears to belong to the division of herons, designed under the name of Semi-Egrets (See my Muséum des Pays-Bas, Ardeae, p. 20), and approaches in general appearance more particularly to Ardea gularis and jugularis, but being very distinct from all of them

by a different system of coloration of the plumage, which in some measure reminds us of that of the rare species of true, buth rather small sized heron from Australia, Ambon and Celebes, called Ardea picata.

The specimens, five in number, obtained by Mr. Teysmann bear a most perfect resemblance to one another. Not one shows a trace of lengthened linear feathers, neither at the neck, nor at the chest or rump. The plumage presents properly but two colors, viz. white and blackish slate-color. The white, however strongly inclines to ashy grey on the front, the crown, the sides of the head and the basal part of the feathers of the throat. The dark color occupies the mantle, the whole back, the tail with its upper and under coverts, the feathers of the thighs, the sides of the body, and the whole underside of the wings, which, however, are lined with white on their external margin.

The feathers of the neck and chest are somewhat lengthened, but of no unusual form. The bill, somewhat slender and very slightly curved towards the tip, is of a yellowish color and the naked parts of feet in their entire extension appear to have been of this same color.

The inner margin of the nail of the middle toe is serrated, like in other herons.

The measures of the principal parts of these species are as follow —

Wing seven inches and a half to seven and three quarters of an inch (French measure). Bill from front twenty six to thirty lines; height of bill five lines; but soon diminishing to four lines. Tarse thirty two to thirty five lines. Middle toe without nail twenty-three lines; nail of this toe four lines. Hind toe eleven lines; its nail five lines. Naked part of tibia eighteen lines.